

Nadler Urges Wal-Mart to Help Safeguard American Ports

Thursday, 01 March 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) sent a letter (text below) signed by 21 of his colleagues to Wal-Mart CEO H. Lee Scott, Jr. urging his company's support for 100% scanning of cargo containers bound for American ports, a provision the House passed in the Implementing the 9/11 Commissions Recommendations Act (H.R.1) earlier this year. At the same time, nine Senators, led by Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), sent a letter to the Wal-Mart CEO urging him to support 100% scanning, arguing that such a law is necessary to protect our national security.

"As America's largest importer of goods, it is critical that Wal-Mart support legislation requiring 100% scanning of all U.S.-bound cargo containers for weapons of mass destruction," said Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY).

"Experts agree that our ports are vulnerable to terrorist attack and the government, so far, has failed to take the threat seriously. The bill we passed in the House ensures that no container will be placed on a ship bound for the United States unless it has been scanned for nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and their components. I hope the final version of the bill contains this provision."

Mr. Nadler's House colleagues who co-signed the letter include: Rosa DeLauro, Neil Abercrombie, Joe Baca, Donna Christensen, Elijah Cummings, Peter DeFazio, Eliot Engel, Maurice Hinchey, Dennis Kucinich, Tom Lantos, Carolyn Maloney, Edward Markey, James McGovern, John Olver, Janice Schakowsky, Hilda Solis, Maxine Waters, Diane Watson, Anthony Weiner and Robert Wexler.

March 2, 2007

H. Lee Scott, Jr.

President and CEO

Wal-Mart Stores Inc.

702 SW Eighth Street

Bentonville, AR 72716

Dear Mr. Scott:

Wal-Mart is America's largest importer, with one container entering America every 45 seconds. In the best interest of the American people and in order to secure our ports, we believe it is critical that Wal-Mart openly support legislation which would require 100% scanning of cargo containers bound for the U.S., as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in H.R. 1.

Strengthening America's port security, by scanning 100% of the cargo, is a critical and necessary piece to securing our homeland and protecting Americans from the threat of another 9/11 terrorist attack. The American people want us to do everything we can to protect our country and that is why we should insist on scanning 100% of cargo containers.

Mr. Scott, as you must agree, we cannot afford to leave America vulnerable to another 9/11 terrorist attack. It is critical that Wal-Mart use its influence to support legislation that requires 100% scanning of all of cargo containers bound for the U.S.

With one out of every 25 containers shipped to the United States in 2005 destined for a Wal-Mart and Wal-Mart's imports growing every year, Wal-Mart's open support for this legislation could make a critical difference in enacting this bill into law.

While we understand Wal-Mart's fear that scanning cargo containers may impact the speed at which it moves containers into the United States, we strongly believe that this concern is unfounded. In Hong Kong, the Integrated Container Inspection System (ICIS) pilot program has successfully achieved 100% scanning, proving that the technology works without slowing down commerce. In order to ensure that the rest of the shipping community has the time it needs to comply with the bill, H.R. 1 phases in the scanning requirements over three to five years, and allows DHS to grant one year extensions to a port if the scanning equipment is unavailable to purchase and install.

We call on Wal-Mart to do the right thing for America, and join with us in our effort to secure America's ports and improve our nation's security.

We would urge you to take a personal interest and active role in resolving this issue as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Representative Jerrold Nadler

Representative Rosa DeLauro

Representative Neil Abercrombie

Representative Joe Baca

Representative Donna Christensen

Representative Elijah Cummings

Representative Peter DeFazio

Representative Eliot Engel

Representative Maurice Hinchey

Representative Dennis Kucinich

Representative Tom Lantos

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